

REMARKS

The Office Action dated April 18, 2006, has been received and reviewed by the Applicants. Claims 1-22 are in the application. The Applicants thank the Examiner for his thorough review of this application which stated in part that claims 1-5, 8, 11-17, and 22 stand rejected under 102(e) as being anticipated by German et. al. (US 6,938,984) and that claims 6-7 stand rejected under 103(b) as being unpatentable over German in view of Karlinski (US 6,485,137) and claims 9, 10, and 18-21 stand objected to in view of these patents and additionally in view of Nakamura (US2005/0083367), Donahue (US 6,494,553), and Baker (US 6,832,824) respectively. This paper has amended claims 1, 4, 8, and 11 to more particularly point out that which the Applicants regard as the invention as further described on page 4, lines 5-8.

The Applicants agree with the Examiner that German does not teach “having the controller be ‘operative to halt printing by the print head in response to at least one low level sensor sensing a low fluid level and to modify a print apparatus operator’” [see item 21]. The Applicants also agree with the Examiner that German does not teach a “at least one low level sensor position to sense a low fluid level in the purging reservoir” [see item 23] or a controller “operative to halt printing by the print head in response to at least one low level sensor sensing a low fluid level.” [see item 25] or “a print sensor positioned to sense the color of ink printed by the head...being able to ‘report the color..’ and the controller matching a color of ink ..” [see item 26]. These are all important elements of the present application which are not taught in German. Before addressing these elements, the Applicants will discuss the prior art cited.

The Applicants strongly disagree that German alone, or in conjunction with other art, discloses the system disclosed and now claimed by the Applicants. There is no discussion in German of a “feed valve “ as claimed in the present application. The Applicants could not locate any description of the feed valve, as described and claimed in the present application, when reviewing German. In fact, in Col. 7, lines 47-48 the only thing close were the words “purging valve member” to describe a simple purge valve on the waste container, not a valve as described and claimed in the present invention. German certainly does not discuss or teach any purging apparatus or stem or related method. Col 9, lines 1-2, 18-35 mentions “purging the ink supply loop” and describes it clearly as a different system and related process then is taught in the present application. In fact a close read of lines 21-31 make it very clear that fluid would be dead-ended, or trapped by the apparatus and system described which is the very problem that the present invention overcomes. The feed valve of the present invention allows fluid (either ink and/or urge fluid) to always be moving, thus preventing the common problems associated with trapped and thus wasted, fluid especially ink. Col. 11, lines 55-58 makes it very clear that there is different apparatus and

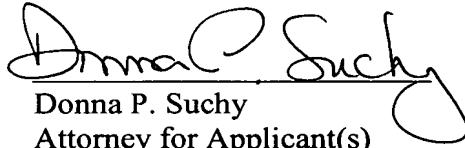
system described since it states that "a cleaning fluid may be dispensed and circulated through the first ink channel 44 and expelled to the waste collection container to clean and purge the lines" but obviously it could not be pumped at the same time as the ink as can be accomplished in the present invention because there is only one path through the valve, unlike the present invention. The cited references "22" and "24" of Fig. 1 of German, further support the fact that German as well as the other cited art, does not teach the present invention since these references are to the collection container for waste and not in the circulation system for ink or purge fluid movement as the feed valve of the present invention describes and claims.

Independent claim 1 claims "feed valve." Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Karlinski, Nakamura, Donahue, and Baker do not add anything to German that would make it obvious to replace the device described in German with the "apparatus, including the feed valve" claimed by the Applicants since there is not an "feed valve" as claimed in the present application described in any of these patents.

The Applicants are not aware of any additional patents, publications, or other information not previously submitted to the United States Patent and Trademark Office which would be required under 37 C.F.R. §1.99.

For the reasons set forth above, it is believed that the application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and favorable action are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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If the Examiner is unable to reach the Applicant(s) Attorney at the telephone number provided, the Examiner is requested to communicate with Eastman Kodak Company Patent Operations at (585) 477-4656.